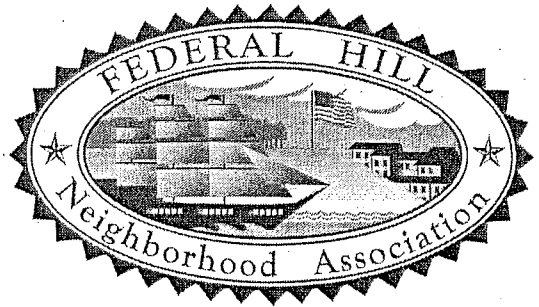


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The Monthly Newsletter of the Federal Hill Neighborhood Association

March, 2008

Working on Your Behalf An Interview With Michelle Pierce

By Jeannie Malkiewicz

Okay, when I say lawyers, what image comes to mind? From Perry Mason to Ally McBeal to Boston Legal, they all appear to be wealthy, witty and glamorous?

What if I said "Non-profit" and then "Law Firm" – would you think it an oxymoron? What if I told you that this firm has become an integral part of the revitalization efforts in communities all around Baltimore, from Belair-Edison to Brooklyn-Curtis bay?

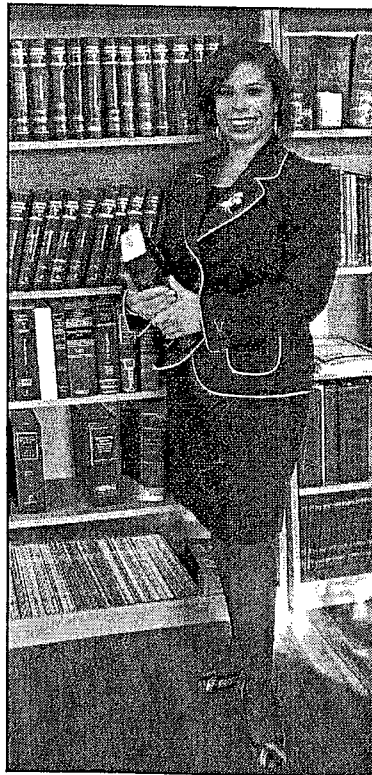
If you ever attended a Liquor Board Hearing, or some of our FHNA General Membership meetings, you might have seen, or met, Michelle Pierce, FHNA's counsel from the Community Law Center, Inc; a firm that has done just that!

Started over 20 years ago, CLC functioned as an informal network of volunteer attorneys and community organizers committed to providing legal assistance to communities in Baltimore trying to improve their neighborhoods through their Neighborhood Associations.

Today, CLC—employs six full-time attorneys, and a roster of 227 pro-bono attorneys from some of the area's top law firms. Many prominent people serve on their Board.

In 2006 alone, they represented nearly 200 clients in cases ranging from improving the environment, beautifying vacant lots, preserving historic properties and challenging liquor licensees on nuisance laws.

Like their clients, the staff at CLC is passionate about doing their part to create a better Baltimore. In 2003, they helped uncover unscrupulous practices by national mortgage services that sparked HUD investigations nationwide and industry changes that were made to better protect people from losing their homes to foreclosures.



Michelle Pierce

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(Michelle Pierce continued from page 1)

FHNA's legal counsel, Michelle Pierce, joined them in 2006. She has represented us in numerous cases, usually at Liquor Board or Zoning Hearings. She also represents several other community associations on the SoBo peninsula.

I asked Michelle what we, as individuals, could do to help improve our community and she offered the following suggestions:

JOIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION – the more members an association has, the more impact their opinions make on a case.

PARTICIPATE IN YOUR ASSOCIATION – No one has a lot of free time on their hands, but even 1-2 hours a month can make a difference.

ASK QUESTIONS AND DON'T BE AFRAID – when you see something that doesn't look right, it probably isn't. Contact your Board, your politicians or the police (and sometimes all 3, depending on the problem).

We would like to thank Michelle for all of her continued work on our behalf and also express our gratitude to the Community Law Center, Inc. for everything they do to make our city and our communities better, safer places to live and work.

Note: since they are a non-profit organization, CLC relies entirely on donations from individuals and businesses. Please remember them generously.